



By the King.

A Proclamation against excesse of Lavish and Licentious Speech of matters of State.



Lthoug the commixture of Nations, confluence of Ambassadors, and the relation, which the affaires of Our Kingdomes have had to- wards the businesse and interests of foraine States, have caused, during Our Regiment, a greater opennesse, and libertie of discourse, even con- cerning matters of State, (which are no Theames, or subjects fit for bulgar persons, or common meetings) then hath been in former times, bled or permitted; And although in Our owne Nature, and Judge- ment, wee doe well allow of convenient freedome of speech, esteeming any over curious or restrained hand carried in that kind, rather as a Weaknesse, or else over much severitie of Government, then otherwise:

Yet neverthelesse, soasmuch as it is come to Our eares, by common report, That there is at this time a more licentious passage of lavish discourse, and bold Censure in matters of State, then hath been heretofore, or is fit to be suffered; wee have thought it necessary, by the advice of Our Privie Councell, to give forewarning unto Our loving Subjects, of this excesse and pre- sumption; And straitly to command them and every of them, from the highest to the lowest, to take heede, how they intermeddle by Penne, or Speech, with causes of State, and secrets of Empire, either at home, or abroad, but containe themselves within that modest and reverent re- gard, of matters, above their reach and calling, that to good and dutifull Subjects apper- taineth; As also not to give attention, or any manner of applause or entertainment to such dis- course, without acquainting some of Our Privie Councell, or other principall Officers therewith- all, respectiv to the place where such speeches shall be bled, within the space of foure and twentie houres, vnder paine of imprisonment, and Our high displeasure.

And let no man thinke, after this Our forewarning, to passe away with impunitie, in respect of the multitude and generalitie of Offenders in this kinde; but knowe, that it will light vpon some of the first, or forwardest of them, to be severely punished, for example to others.

And, if we shalbe sensible of this kind of contempt, even towards such of Our loving Subjects, as are obedient to Our Lawes, and conformable to Our proceedings in Church, and Common wealth, unto whom, wee cannot impute it, to proceede otherwise, then out of rashnesse, evill custome, or too much passion; much more, let them looke to it, who in respect, that they are other- wise liable to Our Lawes, or of suspected affection towards Our Government, may give vs iust cause to thinke, that it proceedeth from the overflowe of a worse, or more corrupt fountaine.

Neither let any man mistake vs so much, as to thinke, that by giving faire, and specious attri- butes to Our Person, they can cover the scandalls, which they otherwise lay vpon Our Govern- ment, but conceiv, that wee make no other construction of them, but as fine, and artificiall glos- ses, the better to give passage to the rest of their imputations, and scandalls.

Giuen at White-hall, the 24. of December, in the eighteenth yeere of Our Reigne of Great Britaine, France and Ireland.

God saue the King.

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